creation of name authority files used in the controlled vocabulary LCNAF. Appendices include a glossary, companion standards, and crosswalks.

Some DACS information that may impact how you write finding aids:

- DACS prescribes the use of "undated" for material that does not have a date (see rule 2.4.16, p. 28).
- DACS discourages the use of abbreviations in description.
- DACS discourages the use of square brackets to communicate description. A legacy system from *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, the use of square brackets has in general been abandoned by archivists when creating finding aids. The explicit direction to not use square brackets in MARC catalog records promotes a closer parallel between EAD and MARC coding. This will not affect your EAD document, but should positively affect your MARC records.

## About this Document

The inclusion of DACS references throughout the template has not dramatically changed the structure of this document. Some aspects of the best practice guidelines have remained the same, others have been revised, and new sections have been added to meet the needs of the growing NCEAD community. This document is meant to represent the best practice for the implementation of EAD in North Carolina in order to assure consistency across institutions as well as to provide a starting point for documentation within an individual institution. These guidelines are in no way meant to be the only documentation an individual institution will need to consult. NCEAD community members are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with DACS. Where appropriate, relevant rule numbers and page numbers have been indicated, but the rules themselves are not repeated in this document. Every effort has been made to accurately match the appropriate content standard rule with encoding guidelines. Currently, there is no online version of *DACS* so hypertext links to rules cannot be made at this time.

In addition, institutions will be required to examine the *EAD Tag Library Version 2002* and other resources available on the implementation of EAD. There are several aspects of the NCEAD template that may compel individual institutions to examine their arrangement and description procedures. While this document provides guidelines to the kinds of decision-making processes that need to take place for EAD implementation, it in no way assumes that there are single answers to those questions. There are a number of supporting documents that provide detailed information about certain aspects of an EAD program. In order to streamline and produce effective *Best Practice Guidelines*, these documents are cited, but not reproduced here. One such document, entitled "Examples Accompanying the NCEAD Best Practice Guidelines EAD 2002" is intended as a series of encoded finding aids that will demonstrate various interpretations of NCEAD's encoding guidelines with accompanying discussion. It is hoped that this document will be dynamic as participating institutions contribute newly encoded interesting case studies to share with the NCEAD community. The examples document is forthcoming.